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## *THE OLD THEOLOGY AND THE NEW*

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By the old theology we mean the type of theology which, whatever its date, ignores the modern scientific movement and is unaffected in method by the results of that movement. By the new theology, conversely, we mean the type of theology whose method is determined by the modern scientific movement and which is hospitable to its results. The purpose of this article is to ask what is the relation of the two, what they have in common, wherein they differ, and what ought to be the attitude of the representatives of the one to the other.

By the modern scientific movement is meant the movement of thought whose chief marks on the outward side are the acceptance of development as the law of the physical universe, and on the inward side the recognition of the contribution of mind to the content of knowledge. It is a movement to which it is not easy to set exact chronological limits. While Darwin and Kant are the names that we commonly associate with its beginnings on the outward and the inward side respectively, it goes back in principle much further. When Copernicus substituted for the prevailing geo-centric astronomy his new helio-centric system, he was using principles of which our modern view of the world is only the fuller and completer expression.

The old theology, I say, is the theology whose method antedates this modern scientific movement and is unaffected by its results. All turns here on the term "method." The new theology is not a matter of date, but of principles. In all the different churches are men modern in the details of their theology, taking over

now this and now that result from current criticism and investigation, but in principle old theologians, because their method remains unaffected by the fundamental change in the principles of thinking which we call the modern scientific spirit.

There is, then, no lack of representatives whom we might take as illustrations of our subject. They might be drawn from the various schools of thought, Calvinistic, Arminian, Lutheran, Anglican, for in all these historic types the same fundamental difference of point of view may be illustrated. But for our present purpose we will take that particular theological system which is the most virile, clear-cut, and independent of them all, and which has, moreover, the advantage of being the school from which many of us can trace our own theological inheritance. I mean historic Calvinism. Whatever else may be questionable, we shall all agree that Calvinism is a typical representative of the old theology.

## I

The first thing that strikes us as we approach the Calvinistic system is the fundamental dualism in its view of the world. The universe is divided into two parts, nature and the supernatural. The former is the world of law, in which everything takes place uniformly, that is to say, in which, when any event happens, you can predict with certainty that it will be followed by such and such other events. The latter is the world of grace, or, in other words, of miracle, that is to say, of those unpredictable divine activities which break in upon the uniformity of nature out of a clear sky, and have no known antecedents to which they can be referred. Nature can be known by human reason, but to the realm of grace we have access only through revelation. Man, as we know him today, is a member of the former realm. He is a child of nature, and his knowledge is limited to the orderly sequences of law. What God may intend in the higher realm we cannot tell, save as the Almighty graciously makes his purposes known through revelation.

This limitation of knowledge, to be sure, was not native to man. Man was created righteous, and in his original state was fully acquainted with God's purposes on his behalf; but this vantage-

ground of knowledge he lost through sin, and as a result the race as a whole is not only unable to do anything that is good, but is ignorant of the only remedy that could deliver it from its state of helplessness. If man is to be saved, God must intervene. He must impart to his sinful creatures the knowledge which they are unable to obtain for themselves; and in fact such gracious interventions have taken place from time to time in human history. God revealed himself to Adam in the garden, he revealed himself to Abraham, to Isaac and Jacob, to Moses and the prophets, and, finally, most clearly to mankind in Jesus Christ.

We can see now the great significance which the Bible has for the old theology. The Bible is the repository of divine revelation. In it the gracious God has gathered up the special communications which from time to time he has been pleased to vouchsafe to men, and they are here preserved in permanent form for the enlightenment and guidance of future generations. The Bible, therefore, is the one certain means by which man can find a remedy for the misery in which his sin has involved him. It is his only infallible rule of faith and practice.

But the Bible alone is not enough. Many men read the Bible who are not saved, and the reason is that they do not read it understandingly. For this there must be a special communication of God, a direct revelation to the heart of each man through the divine spirit. The supernatural activity of God without is matched by a similar activity within. Through the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti* God assures the believer of the divine authority of his word, and in regeneration creates within him a divine life which makes it possible for him to avail himself of the gracious provision revealed therein.

This deep-cut division in the world and in human life goes back finally to God himself. The principle of law and the principle of grace are alike rooted in his nature. As holy, God is under law, bound by the necessity of his own inexorable justice to punish all sin; as gracious, he is able to show mercy or withhold it as he pleases, owning no sovereignty but that of his own inscrutable and self-determining will.

From this fundamental antithesis all the other articles of the Calvinistic system necessarily follow. It determines the con-

ception of punishment. Punishment is the price which divine justice exacts for sin. It determines the conception of salvation. Salvation is remission of penalty on the basis of a substitutionary atonement. It determines the doctrine of the person of Christ. Christ is both God and man, two natures in one person; man that he may make atonement, God that he may be able to make it. It determines the doctrine of the trinity. God is three persons in one substance, for if there be no such distinction in his being, it will be impossible for him in his capacity as Son, the representative of mercy, to make the atonement exacted by himself in his capacity of Father, the representative of justice. Finally, it determines the conception of the church. The church is the organization divinely intrusted with the means of grace, the one institution among men through which the divine revelation in the Bible and the sacraments is preserved and handed down from generation to generation.

We are not interested here in the details of the system. Our concern is rather with its consequences. First among these we may mention the definite standard which Calvinism gave its adherents. The writer was once walking through New York City with Dr. Wilfred Grenfell, the well-known missionary to Labrador. It was towards midnight, and we had been discussing some of the perplexing problems which the complex life of the city presents. Grenfell had been silent for some time. At last he said abruptly: "I wish I were back in Labrador. It is so much easier to know what is right in Labrador than it is in New York." No old-time Calvinist would have felt the impulse to express Grenfell's wish. To him right was right everywhere and always, in Labrador and in New York, and he knew what was right at any time or in any place, for it had been divinely revealed once for all in the Bible. His duty was simply to hear and obey.

A second consequence was the clear line drawn between the religious and the secular. The church and the world, God and Satan, confronted each other like two hostile camps, and it was the duty of every believer to come out of the one and ally himself with the other. The result was a lessening of interest in many things that other ages have valued, art, letters, the institu-

tions of civil government, culture and civilization in the broadest sense. All these were valueless in themselves except as they could be made instruments to promote the service of God and the welfare of his church.

A third consequence was the reinforcement of power which came with the consciousness of immediate dependence upon God. Duty was rooted in faith, and at every reading of the decalogue the thunders of Sinai still made themselves heard. To man the task required might seem hard, but with God all things were possible, and the man who put his trust in him might be sure that in the end he would prevail.

Such, then, is the old theology, in contrast to which the new theology must be judged. We have taken Calvinism for our example, but we might equally well have taken Arminianism, or Anglicanism. Arminianism gives the human will more place in its dealings with God. The will is an arm which man himself has the power to reach across the gulf separating him from God to clasp the hand outstretched from the other side. In Anglicanism the sacraments are given a larger place than in the more radical Protestant systems. God meets man not only or chiefly through the Bible, but in the sacraments, those mystic rites consecrated by immemorial usage, through which the guilt of sin is washed away in baptism, and the corrupt and mortal nature renewed by feeding on the body and blood of Christ. But these are differences of detail. The fundamental lines remain the same. In each case we face the same antithesis between law and grace, nature and the supernatural, the human and the divine. There is no place for toleration or compromise. We deal in absolute antitheses, realities that have remained unchanged from the beginning. The conceptions of development, of growth, of adaptation, of progress, are unknown.

What, then, shall we say of this old theology which we have thus briefly passed in review? What is its meaning as a phenomenon in human history, and what its value for human life? To answer these questions intelligently we must first ask and answer certain others. First, where did this theology come from? Secondly, what gave it its power over the men who held it? And thirdly, why is it no longer satisfying to us today?

And, first, where did the old theology come from? The answer to this is very simple. It was the outcome of the Protestant Reformation, that great protest against Catholicism which took place in the first quarter of the sixteenth century; and it bears the marks of its origin. Three different strands enter into it, which we must distinguish if we are rightly to understand it.

In the first place, there is the Christian element, which was preserved in Catholicism and inherited by Protestantism from it. The importance attributed to the Old Testament as a source of revelation, the central place given to Jesus as the founder of Christianity, the Saviour of men, and the Lord of his church, the conception of God as a God of grace, providing a way of forgiveness for the penitent sinner, the high ethical standard required of man as servant of his brother, the conception of the church as the community of the redeemed, bound together by common faith and consecrated to a common service, all these are elements which belong to primitive Christianity and which have passed over into the old theology through Catholicism.

In the second place, there are certain elements which Protestantism shared with Catholicism. Such are the dualistic view of the world, the conception of freedom as arbitrary choice, and sovereignty as the power to do as you please; the doctrines of total depravity and of original sin, as they were formulated by Augustine in the fifth century; the conceptions of verbal inspiration, and of imputation as a legal transfer of merit from one individual to another, on the basis of mathematical equivalence; the conception of regeneration as a magical change taking place in the subconsciousness, apart from any necessary connection with the faith which is its normal accompaniment and evidence in experience; the function assigned to the visible church as the guardian of the means of grace and the administrator of the divine discipline,—all these are inheritances of Protestantism from Catholicism, and all of them have passed over in one form or another into the old theology.

They are inheritances, I say, of Protestantism from Catholicism, but to say this is only to push the question one step further back. Whence did Catholicism derive them? How was it that it added to the primitive and simple Christianity of the New Testament this elaborate superstructure?

To answer this question in detail would carry us too far, but, in general, it may be said that these new elements represent the reaction of contemporary thought upon Christianity. They are the consequences for religion which followed from the view of the world which was built up little by little by the labor of the great thinkers whom we call the schoolmen. Many of the materials of their majestic structure are found centuries earlier. Greek philosophy contributed a part, Jewish legalism contributed a part, Eastern mysticism contributed a part, logical minds untrained in the methods of experimental science, working over generation after generation the problems that have always presented themselves to the mind, contributed their part. The result, I repeat, was a great system of thought which constituted the world-view of the Middle Ages. Catholicism took over this view of the world, used it in the formulation of its theology, and passed it on to Protestantism in its turn.

To us today there is so much in this old world-view that seems artificial and unreal that it is hard to realize what an advance it was upon the thinking that preceded it. In a world full of mystery and unreason, where the supremacy of law was only imperfectly recognized, where man felt himself surrounded on every hand by spirits, good and evil, who might at any moment break in upon his security by some malicious, or, at all events, some unpredictable act, it was a great gain to build a wall of division between nature and the supernatural which should at least set bounds to their activities. It was a great thing to know that there was a sphere in which law reigned and in which effect inevitably followed cause, even if there remained outside of it a territory impenetrable by reason, from which occasional messengers, celestial or infernal, might invade the common world. Here, at least, was a foundation for science, a territory in which the great achievements of human reason might find a home.

We must remember, then, when we estimate what we have called the Catholic elements in the old theology, that not religion but philosophy is responsible for them. They are, I repeat, the reaction of mediaeval thought upon the Christian religion, and our quarrel with them is not the quarrel of philosophy with religion, but of philosophy with philosophy.



Finally, there are the Protestant elements, the elements, that is to say, which represent the reaction of Protestantism against Catholicism, and its own distinctive contribution to the religious life of man. Among these may be noted the recognition of the direct responsibility of the individual to God, with its corollary in the right of private judgment, the insistence upon the Bible as the sole authority for faith and practice, over against the Catholic insistence upon tradition; the practical character given to doctrine as truth bearing directly upon personal experience, and therefore of the highest importance for every individual to understand, the wider extension of the sphere of religion through the doctrine of the universal priesthood of all believers, and, finally, the insistence upon the same strictness of ethical standard for the layman as was required of the minister.

I have called these elements Protestant because they have found their fullest and clearest expression in historic Protestantism. Yet it is only just to Catholicism to remind ourselves that they have their parallels in the Catholic church. Catholicism too has always had its protestants, its men of immediate religious insight and of high ethical standard, who have dared to criticise the abuses of existing religion, and have pointed the way to a freer and more spiritual faith. The mystics who from age to age have made their appearance in the Catholic church have been such protestants. Francis of Assisi in the thirteenth century was such a protestant, Jansen in the seventeenth was another, Pascal and his friends of Port Royal were others. Had it not been for the work of such men in the past, not only would the position of the Modernists today be untenable, but their very existence would be inexplicable. Modernism is the fruitage within Catholicism of the same principles of freedom and individuality which in our own day have given birth in Protestantism to the new theology.

Such, in general, are the elements that have gone into the making of the old theology in its Protestant form, and which in their action and reaction explain the changes through which it has passed in the course of its history of four hundred years. These changes are due to the fact that the old theology is not wholly old, but at its core, in its doctrine of private judgment and individual responsibility, bears a germ of the new, which, when

furnished with the proper environment, is certain to spring up and bear fruit in surprising and far-reaching modifications. If it were not for the presence of this living germ at the heart of the old theology, enabling it again and again to push out fresh roots through the restraining folds of its inheritance of tradition and to renew its vigor at the pure springs from which Christianity first drew its life, our problem would be far simpler than it is today.

Our second question has to do with the causes which give the old theology its hold upon its adherents. Here too the answer is simple. The explanation of its power is found, where all theology worthy of the name finds its power, in the living experience from which it springs and of which it is in large part an expression. We misunderstand Calvinism when we think of it primarily as a system of doctrine. It was indeed a system, and faced the great questions with which philosophy has to do, but its interest in these was secondary. Primarily it seemed to the men who held it a transcript of experience which they could daily verify in their own souls. Doctrines such as election, preterition, regeneration, justification, effectual calling, perseverance, assurance, which to many in our day have lost their meaning and become empty words, were to them names for realities which had their verification every day in their own lives and in the lives of their friends.

In the fifth chapter of the Westminster Confession of Faith we find this paragraph under the general head of the doctrine of Providence:—

As for those wicked and ungodly men whom God as a righteous judge for former sins doth blind and harden, from them he not only withholdeth his grace whereby they might have been enlightened in their understanding and wrought upon in their hearts, but sometimes also withdraweth the gifts which they had, and exposeth them to such objects as their corruption makes occasion of sin, and withal gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan, whereby it comes to pass that they harden themselves even under those means which God useth for the softening of others.

These sentences express one of the most rigid and repellent of the doctrines of Calvinism, the doctrine of reprobation. But

when we look at them not as theoretical statements, but as a leaf taken out of the book of human life, how true they are! How often we see just such experiences in the lives of the people we know, things that ought to be means of growth proving as a matter of fact causes of corruption and of weakness, the money that one man makes his servant becoming the master of another, knowledge resulting in pride rather than in efficiency, love leading to self-indulgence rather than to unselfishness, even the unfaltering trust, which is the best gift that one human being can give to another, made the occasion for carelessness and indifference.

Or take an illustration from the tenth chapter, another of the hard chapters of the Confession. It is the definition of effectual calling.

All those whom God has predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased in his appointed and accepted time effectually to call by his word and spirit out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ, enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God, taking away their heart of stone and giving unto them a heart of flesh, renewing their wills and by his almighty power determining them to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ, yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace.

Reading this paragraph as a statement of theological doctrine we are repelled by its arbitrariness, but when we look at it as a description of Christian experience we find that it brings before us in living language the essential elements of the process which actually takes place in the soul of a man when he enters upon the religious life,—the enlightenment of the mind, the loosing of the pent emotions, the new purpose impressed upon the will, the sense of an external constraint laid upon one, yet in such form that the consent, when it comes, is most free. All this can be verified in countless lives.

But theology deals not with present experience only, but also with unseen realities. It formulates those great convictions which give support to faith when the shocks of life come and human strength alone seems too weak to withstand their strain. Here, again, the old theology reveals its strength. It brings man face to face with the eternal God and plants his feet upon a rock that

cannot be shaken. This sense of immutable security meets us again and again in lives that have been fed upon the old theology. Its artificiality, its legalism, its separation of things that seem to us to belong together, its pedantic weighing of merit against guilt, —all this disappears when the plan of salvation is contemplated as the purpose of the unchanging God for the redemption of man, his child.

Among Cromwell's letters, contained in Carlyle's classic edition, there is one directed to his son-in-law, General Fleetwood, then Lord Deputy of Ireland. It is dated at Whitehall, June 22, 1655, two years after the dismissal of the famous Rump Parliament. After treating of various matters of business, the writer, then ruler of one of the most powerful nations in the world, and bearing upon his shoulders burdens of responsibility that would have crushed any but the strongest man, concludes as follows:

Dear Charles, my dear love to thee; and to my dear Biddy [his daughter] who is a joy to my heart, for what I hear of the Lord in her. Bid her be cheerful, and rejoice in the Lord once and again: if she knows the Covenant, she cannot but do so. For that transaction is without her; sure and stedfast, between the Father and the Mediator in His blood: therefore, leaning upon the Son, or looking to Him, thirsting after Him, and embracing Him, we are His seed;—and the Covenant is sure to all the Seed. The Compact is for the Seed; God is bound in faithfulness to Christ, and in Him to us: the Covenant is without us; a Transaction between God and Christ. Look up to it. God engageth in it to pardon us; to write His Law in our heart; to plant His fear so that we shall never depart from Him. We, under all our sins and infirmities, can daily offer a perfect Christ; and thus we have peace and safety, and apprehension of love, from a Father in Covenant,—who cannot deny Himself. And truly in this is all my salvation; and this helps me to bear my great burdens.

The literature of Puritanism is full of such examples. Our hymn-books witness on every page to the strength and peace which faith in the God of the old theology brought into the lives of those who put their trust in him.

When I survey the wondrous cross  
On which the Prince of glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss,  
And pour contempt on all my pride.

It is not strange that men who held such a faith should have done a great work in the world. Calvin in Geneva, Cromwell and Milton in England, John Robinson in Leyden, the Pilgrim Fathers at Plymouth Rock, all these are examples of what we might call the pragmatic value of the old theology.

## II

But, if the old theology contains so much that is true and life-giving, why is it no longer satisfactory today? Why do we need a new theology? Has our experience changed? Has our need altered? Or is the cause to be found elsewhere in some new factor that has entered into our environment, but which was not present in the minds that formed the old theology?

We shall be helped to an intelligent answer if we begin by considering how this new theology came to be, and here again we must begin with a definition. What do we mean by the new theology? We mean, as has been said above, the theology whose method is determined by the results of the modern scientific movement, both on the objective side in the acceptance of development as the law of the physical universe, and on the subjective side by the recognition of the contribution which the mind itself makes to the content of its own knowledge. It is a theology which has come into existence as a result of the intellectual revolution through which thought has passed during the last century, and it expresses the reaction of that revolution within the realm of religion. It is not confined to any one country, nor restricted to any branch of the Christian church. It has sprung up independently in different places. In Germany its great name is Schleiermacher, in England, Coleridge. In the Catholic church it appears in Modernism, a movement whose wide ramifications and increasing influence are causing us ever new surprise. Wherever the modern view of the world has become a constituent part of human thinking, there, sooner or later, the new theology has made its appearance.

Let us look at this theology a little more carefully in order to see what it involves. And here, at the outset, we are met with a difficulty. The new theology has no formal creed, in which its

beliefs are embodied. It has no official representative who can speak with authority for the convictions of his fellow-theologians. It is a spirit and a method rather than a body of definite opinions, and any statement of its tendencies must be individual and provisional.

This lack of official standard has often been made a reproach against the new theology on the part of those trained in the old. It seems to them to be not so much a theology as a group of theologies, each inconsistent with the other. And indeed there is not a little in the attitude of the representatives of the new theology to give plausibility to this reproach. It is natural that men who are engaged in the details of investigation should feel more keenly the things which separate them than the premises in which they agree. When one hears in Germany the polemics of the Ritschlians against the Hegelians, or in England or this country the attacks of the pragmatists upon the absolutists; when one sees the Abbé Loisy pointing out how inadequate is the conception of Christianity set forth by Harnack in his *What is Christianity?* and how superior is the type of Catholicism provided by his own book, *The Gospel and the Church*, one is tempted to believe that here are fundamental differences, and to feel that the representatives of the old theology are right when they say that the new theology has no definite standards and no common agreements.

But one needs only to draw aside for a little and look at things in a longer perspective in order to see how misleading such a judgment is. Judged from the point of view which here alone interests us, the questions at issue between the various representatives of the new theology are only differences of detail. Like the differences between Arminianism and Calvinism of an earlier day they are compatible with the recognition of common principles. Indeed, the battle between the pragmatists and the absolutists is only the perpetuation on the new field of the modern world of the old battle which the Arminians and the Calvinists waged with their different weapons two hundred and fifty years ago. I do not say that these differences are unimportant. On the contrary, I believe them to be highly important, but as compared with the issues which we are now considering they are secondary and may be overlooked. As there are principles,

common to all the schools of the old theology, which constitute it a distinct intellectual and religious type, so there are principles common to all schools of the new.

The first and most striking characteristic of the new theology is its view of the world as a unity. The contrast between nature and the supernatural, which was fundamental for the old theology, has disappeared. To us moderns life is all of a piece. The universe is one undivided whole. The same law which holds the planets in their orbits governs the mote which dances in the sunlight outside the window; and the law without is matched by a corresponding law within. The mind has its uniform processes, too, in which cause follows effect in irrevocable sequence.

When we study this law more in detail we find that it is a law of development. Growth is characteristic of all living things, and even the great masses of matter that we call inorganic have been formed little by little through combinations of simpler elements. And it is so with the law of the mind. Thought grows, character develops, and through the reaction of will and feeling and thought upon a changing environment personality is ever becoming. To understand, therefore, the real nature of anything, we have to consider not what it is today, but to what it is tending, the immanent law of its development, the purpose by which character is dominated, the goal which society seeks to fulfil. Reality is teleological. We know what a thing is when we know whither it is going.

The consequence for theology of this change of the point of view is obvious. The premises of the old theology are gone. Nature and the supernatural are not two different kinds of reality, but two different aspects of one and the same reality. Nature expresses the law in the process, the supernatural the end to which it tends. Nature has to do with cause, the supernatural with meaning and value. Man himself partakes of the nature of both realms. He is at once a product of causes and a creator of values. He is limited indeed in power, but, so far as they go, his faculties are trustworthy, and the only way in which he can hope to attain knowledge of any kind is to trust the light that is in him. There are not two kinds of knowledge, the natural knowledge that comes from reason and the super-

natural knowledge that comes through revelation, but there are two aspects of knowledge, the knowledge of the causes which produce effects and the knowledge of the purpose which the effects are designed to serve. Revelation concerns itself with the latter aspect of knowledge. It is God's disclosure to the spirit of man of the meaning of the processes whose causes his reason discovers.

Applying these principles to the Bible, we see that it can no longer be isolated from other books, as was the habit in the old theology. Considered as literature, the Bible is a book like other books. We can trace its origin, follow its history, analyze and explain the processes by which its different elements were brought into the form in which we have them. The uniqueness of the Bible consists in its content, the ideals that it presents, the inspiration which it furnishes, the direct contact into which it introduces us with God and with the spirits of the great men of the past who have lived in daily communion with him.

What is true of God's revelation without, in nature and in the Bible, is true also of his activity in the spirit of man. Here too the abrupt contrasts of the old theology have disappeared from the new. Sin is not a foreign intruder making its appearance in the universe suddenly at a moment of time, and bringing about an abrupt transformation in human nature as a whole. Sin is the inevitable result of certain tendencies inwrought into the structure of human nature. It is the survival of the animal in man, his failure to rise to the higher capacities within him. So, salvation is not an act wrought once for all in some transcendent realm. It is a process going on through the ages, and rooted as truly as sin itself in the nature of man. Atonement is not the great exception, it is the universal law of all true living. Calvary is a principle as well as an event. As Horace Bushnell, one of the greatest of the new theologians, has put it, "A cross has been among the perfections of God from all eternity." So, under other names, justification and sanctification are experiences found outside of Christianity. The church is not composed of exiles from the world, it is the first-fruits of the society that is to be. Jesus is not God and man, he is God in man, the first-born among many brethren, but the type to which all mankind is ultimately destined to conform.



These changes in the interpretation of the divine activity involve a corresponding change in the view of the divine character and of God's relation to the universe. The dualism in the Calvinistic conception of God disappears. God is not thought of as separate from the universe, but rather as its immanent law. He is not a transcendent being living in a distant heaven whence from time to time he intervenes in the affairs of earth. He is an ever-present spirit guiding all that happens to a wise and holy end. We meet him in nature. We meet him in history. We meet him in the Bible. We meet him in the lives of great men, and supremely in Jesus, the ideal man, through whom he has given us the clearest revelation of his character and purpose.

And wherever we meet him he is always the same. He is not sometimes just and sometimes loving, but loving in his justice and righteous in his love. He has but one purpose, which animates him in all that he does, and that is to make individuals like Jesus, and to unite them through brotherly service in the ideal society. In a sense far higher than the old, the new theology makes earnest with the christlikeness of God.

Such, in brief, are some of the fundamental conceptions which meet us in the new theology. We are not interested to follow out the details. They differ in the case of individual theologians. What concerns us here are the practical consequences which follow from these principles for human thought and life.

It is evident that these consequences must differ in important respects from those which we have already considered in connection with the old theology. For one thing, the kind of authority presented is different. The old theology, as we saw, provided a clear-cut and invariable standard, valid everywhere, always, and for everybody. The new theology knows no such standard. It deals with principles rather than laws, and when conditions change, the application of principles has to be modified to suit the changing environment. Right and wrong are determined for us not so much by a standard established in the past as by a purpose affecting the future. As Christians it is our ultimate aim to establish the kingdom of God on earth, but what particular kind of conduct that purpose may involve under any particular set of circumstances can only be determined by a study of the

factors of the problem as they arise. What Dr. Grenfell could do in Labrador he cannot do in New York, and to the new theology that is as it should be.

It follows, in the second place, that the clear-cut line between the religious and the secular, which was so prominent a feature of the old ethics, has been wiped out in the new. There is no particular realm of human experience which one can isolate from the rest and say that it is more divine than others. All life belongs to God, and it is our business as his children to see that his purpose is accomplished in every sphere of human endeavor.

With this broadening of the sphere of religion goes, in the third place, a corresponding modification in the conception of God's relation to man. The consciousness of the immediate presence of God, which was so characteristic a feature of the older piety, is not so prominent in the new. It is not that the belief in the divine presence is lacking, but it is spread over so wide a territory that it is not as palpable to the emotions. It is easier to realize that God is speaking in the thunders of Sinai than to feel his presence in the air we breathe or in the gentle constraints of social custom. We may be no less sure of God's ultimate purposes, but we are more hesitant when it comes to interpreting his utterances in detail.

It is not strange, in view of these changes, that one trained in the old theology should feel a certain inarticulateness in the new. Its breadth seems to him vagueness, its flexibility absence of backbone. The extension of a religious meaning to phases of activity and spheres of experience formerly dismissed as secular seems scant compensation for the breaking-down of customs which have owed their strength and permanence to the religious sanction in a narrower sense. What is to become, we are asked, of Sunday-observance, church-going, family worship, the habit of Bible-reading and of daily prayer, if no firmer basis can be provided for their support than the generalities of the new theology? And we ourselves, when we consider the easy-going religion which is all about us, often share this feeling, and wish now and again that we could recover the unquestioning faith of an earlier age, even at the price of some of its intolerance and narrowness.

And yet, in spite of the manifest practical advantages of the old

theology, we know well enough that it would be impossible for us to go back to the world of Calvin and Edwards, even if we would, and that we would not if we could. Again we ask, Why is this true? Is our change of attitude due to an alteration in our experience, or to the presence of some new factor in our environment? We can now see that both these causes have been at work.

The latter cause is the more immediately apparent. Our primary reason for accepting the new theology is intellectual. We hold it because it explains the facts of life as a whole better than the old. It fits in with the habits of thought which we follow in other phases of our rational activity. When we turn to our Bible, we do not have to abandon the methods which we use when we study Shakspeare or Homer. I once asked a friend, a professor of physical science, how he could oppose the application of critical principles to the study of the Bible. "In my brain," he said, "I keep two compartments, with a wall between them. On one side is my science and on the other my religion. If the wall should break down and the science should overflow, that would be the end of my religion." The new theology frees us from any such danger. It unifies our thinking, and that is in itself a great good.

It is worth while to linger upon this point, for it is of far-reaching importance. Intellectual influences did not play so prominent a part in the creation of the old theology as they have done in the case of the new. Neither Luther, nor for that matter Calvin, was a philosopher. Their interests were primarily moral and religious. We have seen that what we have called the Catholic element in the old theology, or in other words its underlying philosophy, was an inheritance from the past. It was taken over substantially unchanged from contemporary thought. It was a vessel found ready to hand, into which the new wine of moral and spiritual enthusiasm, which we call the Reformation, was poured. Whether it was the best possible receptacle is neither here nor there. It was the receptacle that was at hand and of which it was necessary to make use.

In the case of the new theology, the case is just the reverse. Here the motive at work was primarily intellectual. We have

a new view of the world growing up independently of the existing religion and reacting upon it. A new vessel has been formed, and the old wine is being poured into it. The vessel is strong and capacious, and can easily hold what it has received. Indeed, it is a question whether there is not room for a great deal more than it yet contains.

This explains the charge of indifferentism so frequently brought against the advocates of the new theology. They are called critical, destructive, sceptical, pullers-down rather than builders-up, and it must be confessed that there is truth in the charge. How can it be otherwise? The new theology is the outgrowth of a rational movement, and thought is necessarily critical, destructive, sceptical. The old view of the world which served for a thousand years has broken down, and countless builders are at work on the framework of the new philosophy which is to house our enlarged universe. But religion is not primarily interested in problems of thought. The interest of religion is practical, vital, personal. There must be new wine to fill the new vessel, if we are to have a religion for the modern world that will equal the old in power and vitality. The wine of religion is feeling. If the choice lies between an irrational religion that gives emotional satisfaction and a rational religion which does not, most people will choose the former without a moment's hesitation, as they have done again and again in the past.

But such a choice is not necessary in the present case. While intellectual influences have been prominent in the creation of the new theology, they have not been the only ones at work. Man is a unit, and no great change in thought takes place without producing corresponding changes in emotion and conduct. This is signally true in the case of the new theology. It makes its appeal to the heart and to the will, as well as to the mind. If it owes its origin to curiosity, it finds its verification in experience.

It makes its appeal to the heart. The God of the old Calvinism was a tower of strength to those who put their trust in him, but he was a consuming fire for those who felt themselves outcast from his grace, and the world of the old theology was a world that was full of outcasts. The records of the old insane

asylums have a pitiful story to tell. If one were elect and could know it, all was well, but outside lay the great mass of the unregenerate, for whom there was no hope; and none could tell but in this mass might be included a wife or a husband, a father or a brother, a son or a daughter.

In his famous sermon, "The End of the wicked contemplated by the Righteous: or the torments of the wicked in Hell no occasion of grief to the saints in Heaven," Jonathan Edwards, pleading with the impenitent in his congregation to turn from their sins, uses these words:

You that have godly parents, who in this world have tenderly loved you, who were wont to look upon your welfare as their own, and were wont to be grieved for you when anything calamitous befell you in this world, and especially were greatly concerned for the good of your souls, industriously sought, and earnestly prayed for your salvation, how will you bear to see them . . . now without any love to you, approving the sentence of condemnation, when Christ shall with indignation bid you depart, wretched, cursed creatures, into eternal burnings? How will you bear to see and hear them praising the Judge for his justice exercised in pronouncing this sentence, and hearing it with holy joy in their countenances, and shouting forth the praises and hallelujahs of God and Christ on that account? . . . You that have godly husbands or wives or brethren or sisters, with whom you have been wont to dwell under the same roof, and to eat at the same table, consider how it will be with you when you shall come to part with them; when they shall be taken and you left. . . . However you may wail and lament when you see them parted from you . . . you will see in them no signs of sorrow that you are not taken with them.

If we are to realize what the new theology means for the emotions, we must try to put ourselves back for a moment into the world in which Jonathan Edwards's sermons could be preached and could be heard. The old theology gave us a God who was powerful but arbitrary. The new theology gives us a God who is everywhere and always consistent, a God who can be trusted not for me only, or for my children, or for my church, or for my nation, but to do that which is right and loving and wise for every child of man.

This is a distinct contribution to practical religion. It frees the heart from fear, and gives confidence and security. A God

who is like Jesus everywhere and always is a God in whom we may safely put our trust, and such is the God of the new theology.

But we do not fully measure the experimental value of the new theology until we consider the practical consequences which follow from this faith. To believe in a God of universal love enlarges and reinforces the motive to social service. Our dream is of a redeemed society, a city of God on earth, which shall involve the christianization of all the relations of life and the unity of all mankind in brotherhood, justice, and peace. This is an end that reclaims for divine use and meaning many sides of life for which the old theology could find scant value, and makes the old truth of the universal priesthood glow with a new and diviner meaning.

It is at this point that the practical appeal of the new theology is strongest. The characteristic note of our age is the new social spirit which is stirring all about us. The new theology provides the theoretical basis which is necessary to bring this spirit to self-consciousness. It rationalizes the instinctive faith in a better social order which animates so many of the men and women who are leading in the forward movement in church and state. In the Father who cares for men here as well as hereafter, and whose most acceptable worship is brotherly love, it gives us a God who can command the social conscience as well as satisfy the individual need.

For these three reasons, then, we find the new theology more satisfying than the old. It gives us a securer basis for our thought. It gives us a worthier object for our worship. It gives us an enlarged scope for our service. It is not something of which we need to be ashamed or for which we should apologize; but we may preach it with confidence, sure that when it is understood it will find response in the hearts and minds of men.

### III

We have considered the old theology. We have considered the new. It remains, finally, to consider the relation between the old and the new. What ought to be the attitude which we, who

call ourselves representatives of the new theology, take toward the persons and the institutions which represent the old?

If the conclusions which we have thus far reached are correct, two positions which are often taken on this subject are excluded. The first is the position of those who maintain that there is an absolute antithesis between the old and the new theology, so that the only self-respecting position for the new theologian to take toward the old is that of Cato toward Carthage; the second is that which contends that the two are in substance identical, and that the apparent difference is a matter of phraseology and can be corrected by a change of words.

It is not true, in the first place, that there is an absolute antithesis between the old theology and the new. On the contrary, they have many things in common. Common to both are the fundamental elements of the religious experience, the sense of dependence and of reverence, the consciousness of sin, the longing for salvation, the joy of the soul in contact with God. Common to both are many truths and experiences which are specifically Christian. The conception of God as loving as well as just and powerful, the acceptance of Jesus as the supreme revelation of God, the substitution of an ethical and social for an individualistic and selfish conception of religion, the kingdom of God as the goal of effort and the unifying principle for thought. Common, finally, to both is faith that God is in essence rational, and the effort to give to the content of his revelation a form capable of rational understanding and defence. Here are great reaches of common territory, too broad to be overlooked, too valuable to be lightly abandoned.

Yet, though there is so much in common, there is a real difference between the two. There is, first of all, the fundamental difference in method, which we have already described, a difference which carries with it in either case a consistent view of the world and leads to corresponding differences in practice. The old theology retains in its thought of God an element of arbitrariness and of mystery, and this sense of the unknown hampers it in its practical activities. There is a realm of effort and of aspiration, congenial to the Christian spirit, from which it feels itself debarred. There is a great gulf fixed between world and

church, secular and religious, and that gulf must remain for all time. The new theology recognizes the separation, but refuses to regard it as permanent. The gulf is here to be bridged, sin to be replaced by righteousness, ignorance by knowledge, selfishness by love, the kingdoms of the world by the kingdom of the Lord and of his Christ. This difference is a real difference, and the new theology would not be true to itself if it did not make it apparent.

The true attitude of the new theology to the old, then, would seem to be that of a criticism which is rooted in sympathy. A part of its effort should be to give a more adequate intellectual expression to the body of convictions which the two hold in common because they grow out of similar religious experiences; a part should be to draw the consequences of the deeper religious and ethical insight for which the new view of the world makes room, and so to open the way to a better and more satisfying experience.

You will note that in both cases the stress falls upon experience. Theology, like philosophy, cannot create, it can only interpret; and the material with which it deals is religion. It is one of the unfortunate effects of the period through which we have been passing that this fact has so often been forgotten. Criticism has been exalted from a means to an end, and the great convictions by which the soul of man lives have been treated simply as curious historical phenomena, the unravelling of whose rise and fall constitutes a fascinating problem for the mind. This unsympathetic attitude is, I believe, one of the chief reasons for the wide-spread suspicion of the new theology, but it is a phase which is sure to pass. Indeed, I believe that it is rapidly passing. As the new view of the world becomes more familiar, and the results of criticism more assured, men will gradually come to see more clearly how impotent is thought apart from faith. They will value theology, whether new or old, in the measure in which it deepens, enriches, and purifies experience.

It is through our common experience, then, that we have to seek our approach to an understanding with those who hold the old theology. We have to show that the region which the new knowledge opens for thought to explore is at the same time,



as is always the case with human discovery, an invitation to new experiences. But we have also to show, and this is no less important, that with the intellectual resources which the new knowledge puts at our disposal we can give to the old convictions a surer and more satisfying expression than they have ever received before. If the new theology can do this, it will last; if not, it will have to give place to a newer.